

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

45-06

7/25/06

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR FSIS NOTICE 34-06, CERTIFICATION OF INTESTINES OR ANIMAL CASINGS FOR EXPORT

FSIS is issuing the following questions and answers in response to questions the Agency has received. FSIS may post additional questions and answers on the Technical Service Center web page.

Q1. What is the purpose of FSIS Notice 34-06?

A1. The purpose of the notice is to inform inspection personnel that, for intestines from an amenable species to be processed into casings that can be certified for export as edible product by FSIS personnel, they must bear the mark of inspection. FSIS will not certify for export intestines that do not bear the mark of inspection.

Q2. FSIS Notice 34-06 states that intestines should be “visibly free of digestive tract contents.” What does this mean?

A2. This statement does not mean that intestines are subject to a zero tolerance standard for ingesta and fecal material. That standard applies to livestock carcasses and parts only (See FSIS Directive 6420.2). The zero tolerance standard does not apply to intestines.

This statement should be applied in light of the need to assess the product's usability for its intended purpose. The intestine must be in appropriate condition for use as an edible product to get the mark of inspection. Inspection program personnel should verify that the establishment demonstrates good process control in cleaning intestines and make reasonable efforts to remove contamination during cleaning and other processing of the product. No significant amount of fecal material or other contamination should remain on or in the intestine, although some small amount of digestive tract material may adhere to the intestine (mainly the intestinal mucosal lining) even after a reasonable effort to clean it has been made. The presence of such material should not cause inspection program personnel to not apply the mark of inspection. Inspection program personnel should make their determinations of the

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acceptability of product to bear the mark based on production lots and process controls rather than on individual units of product. Office of Field Operations supervisory personnel will correlate with inspection program employees as deemed necessary.

Q3. Does the mucosa (on the inner surface of the intestine) need to be stripped away for the intestine to be “visibly free of digestive tract contents”?

A3. No, the establishment does not have to strip the mucosa from the intestines for them to be given the mark of inspection.

Q4. Are intestines that are intended to be processed into casings required to bear the inspection legend prior to leaving an official establishment?

A4. No, establishments may prepare and ship in commerce intestines without the mark of inspection. However, FSIS will not certify for export such intestines.

Direct any questions to the Technical Service Center at 1-800-233-3935.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shirley S. Dwyer".

Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development